

## NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM

### Is it Mile-a-Minute Vine?

Mile-a-Minute Vine's distinguishing features are the extremely triangular leaves, sparse but strongly prickled stem, and the clasping leaf-like structure at the base of flower heads and leaf stems. It can be confused with other species like tearthumbs, bindweeds, American hog-peanut, and others. Look closely, you may be able to determine which plant you have!

**Mile-a-Minute Vine** has leaves that are very triangular, not lobed at the base. Stems have sparse but strong reflexed prickles, and clasping leaf-like structures at the leaf base and flower stem. Pale green flowers are inconspicuous, and fruits are red, white, and blue.

Species that have been mistaken as Mile-a-Minute vine include tearthumbs, bindweeds, American hog-peanut, poison ivy, Asiatic bittersweet, and climbing nightshade. Go Botany is a great resource that has more photos and identifying information for all of these species, <https://gobotany.nativeplanttrust.org>.

For more information on invasive species in Maine, please visit the DACF-MNAP website, which has individual pages for many invasive species, links to Invasive Plant Rules, and links to companies that offer control services, <https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mnap/features/invasiveplants/invasives.htm>.

If you encounter a vine resembling mile-a-minute weed, we encourage you to take photos, note the location, and report the finding via email to [Invasives.MNAP@maine.gov](mailto:Invasives.MNAP@maine.gov) or call (207) 287-8044.



**Tearthumbs** are closely related to Mile-a-Minute vine. Many have prickles on the stem, but their leaves are longer, less triangular, and often lobed at the base. There are many species, most lack the clasping bract. Top photos of **Halberd-leaved Tearthumb**, bottom photos of **Arrow-leaved Tearthumb**.



Photos: Bruce Patterson | Glen Mittelhauser | Arthur Haines | Arieh Tal



**American Hog-peanut** is a native vining species. Leaves have three leaflets that are ~ triangular with a slightly rounded base, and it has pea-like flowers.

Photos: Arthur Haines | Glen Mittelhauser | Katy Chayka



**Bindweeds** lack prickles on their stems. There are five commonly found bindweeds that can be weedy.

**Hedge False Bindweed** is a native species that has large flowers with two conspicuous bracts at the base and leaves that are arrow-shaped with pointed lobes directed backward.



Photos: Glen Mittelhauser | Marilee Lovit | Arthur Haines

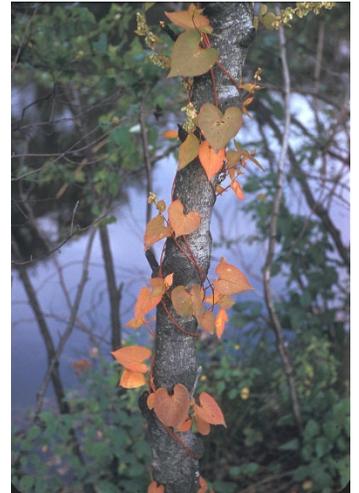


**Field Bindweed** is a non-native species with large flowers that lack the two bracts at the base. Leaves are arrow-shaped with pointed lobes that can be directed backward or outward.

Photos: Gerry Carr | Gerry Carr | Arthur Haines



**Fringed Bindweed, Climbing Bindweed, and Black Bindweed** are similar vining plants in the genus Fallopiia. The first two are native, though Black Bindweed is non-native and weedy. These three species have nodes along their stems and superficially resemble each other. The nodes are fringed in Fringed Bindweed but not the other two. Keels on flower petals and fruit texture distinguish the other two species.



Fringed Bindweed (left and right above): Don Cameron | Frank Bramley



Fringed Bindweed (2 photos above):  
Arieh Tal | Marilee Lovit

Black Bindweed (left and right above): Glen Mittelhauser | Glen Mittelhauser

**Poison Ivy** is a native vining species that also has leaves with three leaflets. It can be woody but isn't necessarily so. Leaf shape and glossiness can be extremely variable.

Photos: Richard Gardner, Bugwood.org | Arthur Haines |  
Richard Gardner, Bugwood.org



**Asiatic Bittersweet** is an invasive vine. Its stem can be woody or not. Leaves are round to somewhat elliptical and vaguely to strongly toothed around the edge. It has distinctive orange-red fruits in the fall.

Photos: DACF-MNAP | Chris Evans, Bugwood.org |  
DACF-MNAP



**Climbing nightshade** has distinctly lobed leaves, purple and yellow flowers, and bright red fruits.

Photos: Arthur Haines | Don Cameron |  
Frank Bramley



For more information on mile-a-minute weed and other invasive species of concern in Maine, please visit [MNAP's invasives plants webpage](#).

Let's work together to protect our state's biodiversity and preserve its natural beauty!